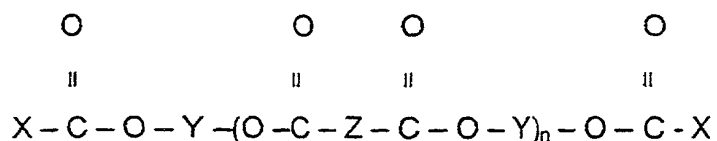


CLAIMS

1. An ester or ester composition according to the formula:



wherein X is an aliphatic hydrocarbyl group having 5 – 11 carbon atoms;

Y is an alkylene group having 2 – 8 carbon atoms;

Z is an aliphatic hydrocarbyl group having 3 – 5 carbon atoms and

n is a weight average number between 1 and 10.

2. An ester as claimed in claim 1 wherein the ester has a kinematic viscosity at 100 °C of less than 20 mm²/s and a kinematic viscosity at 40 °C of less than 150 mm²/s.
3. An ester as claimed in either of claims 1 or 2 wherein X is saturated and linear and has 7 – 9 carbon atoms, Y is saturated and branched and has 4 – 6 carbon atoms, Z is saturated and linear and has 4 carbon atoms, and n is 1.5 – 5.
4. Use of an ester or ester composition as claimed in any of claims 1 – 3 as or in hydraulic fluids or metal working fluids.
5. A process for preparing an ester or ester composition as claimed in any of claims 1–3, by reacting together a monocarboxylic acid having a group X, a diol having a group Y and a dicarboxylic acid having a group Z, wherein the ratio of OH groups and COOH groups in the reaction mixture, at the start of the reaction, is 0.9:1 – 1.1:1 and the ratio of COOH groups from monocarboxylic acid to the dicarboxylic acid in the reaction mixture, at the start of the reaction, is 0.3:1 – 1.5:1.